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AUTHOR Miller, James P.
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ABSTRACT

In this speech, the author argues against the current emphasis in accountability that focuses on ends rather than on means. He contends that this focus leads to programs of self justification -- e.g., programs that increase the size of public relations and research bureaus. The author urges that accountability be effectuated through improved and shared decision making leading to realistic and achievable goal setting. Such decision making involves a systems approach, which relates the worth of a program or proposal to other potential resource allocations. Teachers, according to the author, must also be given a substantial role in decision making. (JF)

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ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE SCHOOLS: BEING RESPONSIBLE OR BEING RESPONSIBLE TO?

James P. Miller

Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A review of the recent history of the schools in societal context will make the current theme of Accountability seem reasonable and expected. The enormous growth in enrollments, necessitating heavy increases in expenditures for both capital outlay and operational funding, has been accompanied by other pressures for increased school funding for the alleviation of social ills. And financial pressures on the schools have been accompanied by similar problems for other government levels as the same increases in population, the mass migrations to urban centers, and the demands of minority groups have caused heavy burdens on taxpayers.

The very large expenditures throughout this period seem to have had an almost negative value for society. The emergence of a new youth culture marked by drugs, riots, and disrespect for society itself, and the seeming insolubility of massive involvements in Vietnam, of minority group problems, and of problems centering on ecology and poverty, have made increasing expenditures highly unpopular, and, in retrospect, highly unlikely. Nor does it seem improbable that much of the burden of unpopularity would inevitably fall upon the government agency closest to the people--the local school district. With other governmental levels and agencies increasingly bureaucratized and remote from direct influence, the demand for responsiveness, for accountability in government

can now be seen as naturally to fall upon the one agency, the schools, which determines community representation and at least part of its financing directly through the ballot. Moreover, as Americans seem generally to believe that schooling is the path to a better society, many of the current perplexities of the national scene are attributed to the failure of schools.

But the schools are not simply innocent victims of these forces and the unrest resulting from them. They have been faced for many years with substantial shortages of both material and human resources with which to meet the challenge of a growing school population. Preoccupied with resource problems, and accepting as permanent and natural the American faith in schooling, school people have failed to keep abreast of changing conditions and of changing possibilities for better doing their work. They, also, have brought into being the now-powerful voices which call for a new sense of responsibility to the commonwealth.

Accountability seems unlikely to disappear soon as a central theme for schools. The question must be raised, therefore, as to what sort of responses may be made. Should the schools turn to a new emphasis on <u>being responsible</u>, or to <u>being responsible to?</u> Is accountability a theme which will emphasize product or process, ends or means? What are the real needs and the real gains available in the determination of the schools' response to the widespread demand for accountability?

There is much emphasis on being responsible to as a response, for turning the attention of school organizations to programs of self-justification as the principal reaction. Note the outward focus in Glass' analysis:

> The simple economic relationship of vendor and buyer is the proper paradigm for analyzing educational accountability. Accountability was born of economic problems...An accountable relationship between buyer and seller involves three elements: 1) disclosure...2) testing... 3) redress...Lessinger never said it better than when he called accountability 'the ability to deliver on promises.'[1]

The emphasis is clearly on ends, not means; on dealing with the public rather than with the organization itself. Briner concurs, asserting that "instructional and management practices must go public."[2] Spencer believes that this direction is inevitable: "A further consequence is that schools will increasingly attempt to demonstrate their results...The importance and size of public relations and research bureaus will increase."[3] Lessinger flatly chooses ends over means as the principal emphasis for schools' response, stating that "Accountability is the product of a process."[4] He makes clear in his writings on the subject, principally in his widely read Every Kid A Winner,[5] that he would in fact turn almost all of the responsibility for accountability over to agencies other than the schools themselves.

The stress on being responsible to the public directly comes from all levels. The desire for intelligible and reasonable accounting for monies spent is as close as the local school neighborhood and as remote as the offices

in Washington which distribute billions for school programs. The theme, as Browder points out, is quite specific, that of "having expended millions of dollars for specifically designated educational programs and having received in return little intelligible information about the results."[6] Hence the clamor for an outward focus, for being responsible to the public (or at least to other governmental agencies as surrogate for the public). The central notion of this desired response is that school districts must bend their efforts toward the outcomes, the end products of their work, and simultaneously toward "opening up" the process of schooling to deep public involvement. A massive study of accountability in the State of California concluded that "Public involvement in the determination of goals may be the precursor to the return of public confidence in education."[7]

There is another view of accountability. It is that school districts must make substantial changes within, that they must focus inwardly to meet the challenge of accountability, that it is the means which must be center of attention rather than the ends. Lopez places this argument as central when he states that "Accountability is intended, therefore, to insure that the behavior of every member of an organization is largely functional...the program has struggled with the common conception that it is an end rather than a means."[8] Dyer concurs with this judgement and asks for specific "educational accountability" at the school building level calling for the responsible knowing and using of

knowledge about its students.[9] Tye verifies this choice of setting for real change, reporting that the Research Division of IDEA found that "the single school unit is the most strategic unit for educational change..."[10] Tye also clearly affirms the need for responsible action by all concerned parties when he assigns value decisionmaking to the public and the legislatures, policy decisionmaking to the school boards, and both institutional and instructional decision-making to professional school people.

Accountability at the school unit level, however, is restricted to the degree that resource allocation decisions are made above that level. It is basic to accountability that an appropriate degree of responsibility be given to those being held accountable. Being responsible is therefore a matter for the management of the school district to the extent that it is at the district level that important decisions are made about material and human resources. And it is at that level that much attention has been focused in calling for management being responsible. Drucker states as a basic rule for executives the heart of the problem: "The knowledge worker must be focused on the results and performance goals of the entire organization to have any results and perfo nce at all."[11] The traditional management tool, the budget, has not been used responsibly in this sense. Noah points out that traditional budgets suffer from "being grouped according to type of input instead of program to be supported...they are silent about the relationship

which exists between changing expenditure and changing output."[12] A very substantial literature now exists about new management tools which can make clearer that missing relationship. These are named variously as PPBS, Cost-Effectiveness, Management by Objectives, PERT, CPM, ad infinitum. What they all share in common is the conviction that responsible management of resources can be increased by systematic efforts to relate the use of the resources to the end product of their use-process.

Accountability as a social theme arises from more than the coincident collision of social pressures; it is a recognition that better use of scarce resources can be made now for whatever goals may be chosen by schools. Browder makes this plain:

> The problem however, will lie in the manner of making accountability operational. The issue of "who-is-accountable-for-what-to-whom" in education is complex, but, argue the pressure of the times, necessary, and, suggest the new technologies, possible.[13]

The point of view to be taken in this paper is that school organizations must meet the challenge of accountability through becoming responsible rather than expending energies on being responsible to. It will specifically argue that excessive concern with being responsible to the public (or its legislative surrogates) is (1) unjustifiable from evidence, (2) dysfunctional for the schools themselves, and, (3) impossible of achievement for any genuine consensus. It will argue, on the other hand, that if school districts meet the accountability challenge with the intention of

improving their own responsibility *per se* that both the schools and their publics will benefit from (1) improved decisionmaking, (2) improved organizational behavior, and, (3) an increase in the outputs expected of the schools.

FOOTNOTES
FOR
CHAPTER I

1. Gene V. Glass, "The Many Faces of 'Educational Accountability'," Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. LIII, No. 10, (June, 1972), pp. 636-639.

2. Briner, Conrad, "Administrators and Accountability," in Browder, L. H., Jr., (ed), Emerging Patterns of Administrative Accountability, McCutchan Publishing Corporation, Berkeley, Calif., 1971, pp. 74-80.

3. Spencer, Ralph L., "Accountability as Classical Organization Theory," in Browder, op. cit., pp. 81-93.

4. Leon Lessinger, "Engineering Accountability for Results in Public Education," Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. LII, No. 4, (Dec., 1970), pp. 217-225.

5. Lessinger, Leon, Every Kid a Winner; Accountability in Education, Science Research Associates College Division, Palo Alto, Calif., 1970.

6. Browder, Leslie H., Jr., "Emerging Patterns of Administrative Accountability--A Point of View," in Browder, op. cit., pp. 1-25.

7. California Joint Committee on Educational Goals and Evaluation, "The Way to Relevance and Accountability in Education," in Browder, op. cit., pp. 127-169.

8. Felix M. Lopez, "Accountability in Education," Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. LII, No. 4, (Dec., 1970), pp. 231-235.

9. Henry S. Dyer, "Toward Objective Criteria of Professional Accountability in the Schools of New York City," Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. LII, No. 4, (Dec., 1970), pp. 206-211.

10. Tye, Kenneth A., "Educational Accountability in an Era of Change," in Browder, op. cit., pp. 456-475.

11. Drucker, Peter, The Effective Executive, Harper & Row, New York, 1966.

12. Noah, Harold J., "Education Needs Rational Decision-making," in Browder, op. cit., pp. 197-212.

13. Browder, ibid., p. 11.

CHAPTER II

THE CASE AGAINST BEING RESPONSIBLE TO

A. The Evidence

So central and important an activity as the schooling of the young is a natural setting for the evocation of rhetoric. A first step toward determining the response of the public schools to calls for accountability is to reject rhetoric and to search for evidence. In the face of so many statements that the public is unhappy with its schools and want substantial changes in them, we are fortunate to have evidence for examination. The Gallup organization, underwritten by C.F.K., Ltd., has made three successive annual national polls to help determine how the American public feels about the schools. The most recent, entitled "The Third Annual Survey of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, 1971," reviews the earlier two in enough depth to make it useful in giving a three-year picture of national attitudes. The following discussion is based on the full published report.[1]

Of foremost importance here is the first major finding of the survey with regard to what the public[2] thought to be the major problem of the public schools. In both 1969 and 1970 the number one response was "discipline." In 1971 there were six responses given frequently enough to be significant. They were, in order of priority: Finance, Integration/ Segregation, Discipline, Lack of Facilities, Drug Taking, and "Poor" Teachers. It is important to note that "Finance" was usually suggested as a problem of "how are we going to

finance the schools," not as a problem of accountability for money spent. The next four of these items dwell on problems of input and/or process, not on the output emphasis usually suggested in accountability discussions. Only the last (and least) of the six, "poor" teachers, would point to the usual discussions of public unrest and the need for accountability.

We must immediately note, in this connection, another finding of the Survey. In this matter, all respondents were asked to assign the chief blame for children doing poorly in the public schools. The results were quite clear in absolving schools from the usual cries for accountability:

All Adults Responding:	Home Life	54%
	Children	14%
	Teachers	8%
	Schools	6%
All Students Responding:	Children	51%
	Home Life	25%
	Teachers	11%
	Schools	5%

The consistency with which the adults recognize the totality of forces which "educate" children is further reflected in the finding that 81% of them would welcome regular meetings which would assist homes and parents better develop in children improved behavior and increased interest in schooling.

Finally, we must note the ways in which the respondents thought the schools to be good. Both adult and students ranked Teachers as the first choice, Curriculum the second, and Facilities third. This will not support the rhetorical contention that impressive facilities and inputs are of

substantive concern, but rather demonstrates that the employees and the work of the schools draw the greatest approval.

We may conclude from such continuing, recent, national evidence that the public-at-large, including the most mature of the schools' clients, are not demanding what many accountability "experts" suggest they are demanding. Things not mentioned in significant number by respondents in the Survey included "we don't know what we're getting for our money," "show us some hard data on what you're accomplishing," and "the schools are failing us," which are the charges usually leveled or demanded by those who call for the schools to begin being responsible to its public.

What is of interest in the Survey is that the public believes that, if economies need to be made in school budgets, they should be accomplished by cutting the budget amounts expended on administration. Here is a clear call for being responsible, for spending public funds as directly as possible on the interactive process in which teachers and students get on with the business of learning.

B. The Difficulty of Consensus

The constant dream in an open society is for consensus, the final and definitive agreement seemingly reachable if only the effort would be made. The development of consensus is implied as a fundamental precondition for being responsible to as the school's response to the need for accountability. Can we, and should we, undertake the task

as a major thrust of the work of the schools?

We know something of the size and the severity of the task. Kerr's study of school boards[3] makes clear the abyssmal ignorance of school matters of those members of the public most likely to be knowledgeable--school board members and candidates. The Gallup Survey asked the public in 1971 to rate the schools as users of innovative practices, and found almost perfectly symmetrical responses indicating too much so, about right, not enough so.[4] And, as Cunningham indicates in his study of public participation in the study of schools in one community, we know in part why these results obtain.[5] Effective participation, he reported, required "fantastic amounts of time...astonishing perseverance and tenacity...patience and understanding...leadership--in fact, unusual leadership."

Knowledge deficiencies, however, might be remedied. What of consensus on goals, on the why of schools in society? The politician-as-barometer may be useful in this matter. The Governor of the State of Michigan, William G. Milliken, provides another instance of the difficulty of consensus in his recent call for accountability.[6] He begins with relating accountability to "what students learn, and how to measure it," the usual and clear-enough instance. He wants, as he goes on to say, "clearly defined" measurement of educational progress. Then, in the same statement, he calls for giving students "respect for the past, confidence in the present, and a faith in the future...a spiritual dimension."

This is but typical and illustrative of the dilemma of those in search of consensus. No matter how many cries are raised for "accountability," for clear, limited objectives subject to objective measurement, there remains in the matter of education other and age-old goals which are important because they reflect something of what it means to be human. The continuing public concern with "discipline" is confirmation of the permanence of these unmeasurable but highly valued aspects of schooling which society will always demand--virtue, obedience, citizenship, humaneness. Consensus which ignores these simply ignores much of what education has always been about. Consensus on what constitute these matters from time to time, and how they may be achieved, seems highly unlikely in an open and fluid society.

A current and pertinent, though narrower, instance of the difficulty of consensus has been raised by Cohen.[7] The present compelling demand for excellent basic education for neglected minority groups is supported by the middle class. But, Cohen points out, the middle class would not accept such a limiting definition of education for its own children. It seems unlikely that any amount of involvement with the public by school people would resolve this dissonance in goal-seeking. In a highly diversified society characterized by varieties of goal-seeking, the likelihood of consensus is improbable.

Consensus as basic to accountability implies a further condition, that redress be available to the public for the failure of those being held-to-account. This implies

that we have a "consensus" available for knowing with reasonable precision how to hold-to-account. The most frequently mentioned consensus, because it seems easiest for objectivity in assessing the responsibility for results, is on the need for basic school skills. If we could reach consensus on these limited output measures, do we have the tools for assessing responsibility? Glass summarizes one view of the present problem:

> The empiricist promises more than he can deliver when he attempts to credit or punish individual teachers, administrators, or school districts on the basis of non-experimental correlational evidence concerning their contributions to the welfare of their pupils. The first such incident of a district being financially penalized because its pupils' performance is below a multiple-regression estimated expectancy score is likely to end up in court, where empirical scientists can be relied upon to give conflicted and embarrassing testimony regarding the validity of the procedures employed.[8]

The problems of consensus rest in the need for shared knowledge, shared goals, agreed-upon methods. It is possible to believe that the schools themselves have little consensus upon these matters. It is also possible to believe (and is being suggested) that a very strong effort might reverse this picture. The question of probable success aside, what gains for education might result from the effort?

C. The Dysfunctions of A Being Responsible To Emphasis

Whatever view of accountability is taken, there is agreement that it is or should be functional for the schools, that some sort of needed improvement in or for public education

must be the result. The notion of accountability as calling for a heavy involvement with the public, for an outward focus, for being responsible to the public, must result in the promise of such improvement, or it must be rejected as a primary response to the call for accountability.

Two functional consequences are usually seen possible as a result of responding with a heavy emphasis on public involvement. One is political, the matter of convincing the public or its legislative surrogates that the schools are worthy of support. The other is educational, that public involvement will itself result in improvements in the processes and results of public education.

Cohen[9] faces the latter possibility squarely and finds little evidence for believing that the learning outcomes for children will be much improved through parental involvement as usually suggested. To believe, he states, that decentralization and its corollary of parental control will improve the schools, one must find evidence that smaller schools outperform larger schools, or that smaller districts achieve greater testable learning outcomes than do larger ones. If on the other hand, he continues, one believes that parental involvement per se will improve childrens' learning, then one must find evidence that this is so. But in neither case, he concludes, is evidence for these possibilities to be found; what evidence does exist is highly contradictory and open to quite opposite interpretations.

But what of the other and more frequently suggested

function of public involvement in the schools--the political function of generating and maintaining support for the organization? The clear danger is goal displacement. Blau and Scott make the point:

> Again, changes introduced to promote the adjustment of an organization to a hostile environment modified the organization's objectives. The general principle illustrated by these changes is that in the course of adopting means the means may become ends-in-themselves that displace the original goals.[10]

It is curious to note that so much of the emphasis on accountability is directed toward expenditures of time and energy toward adults outside the schools rather than to adults and children in the schools where school results are to be obtained. It is especially curious when the public, as we have seen, believes the greatest current misexpenditure of funds is for non-teaching (administrative) tasks. The being responsible to mode of accountability calls to mind endless administrative effort outside the schools and burgeoning administrative staffs assigned to work with a public principally disaffected by expenditures on administration!

It is not this in-and-of-itself that really matters. What really matters is where resources would not be directed, namely the focusing away from the very real problems and needed improvements within the schools. We have seen that parental involvement holds little promise for the improvement of learning outcomes, and indeed, that focusing on such involvement as a political exercise could in fact reduce them

through displacement of resources. One suspects that what the public really wants in a time of short tax resources and questioned school practices and outcomes is a new devotion by school people to their work, the careful allocation of time and energy and money to the activities within schools which show promise of reward for children, rather than extensive programs of public relations which seek to quiet unrest.

A final potential dysfunction awaits the school focus on "what the public wants." It is, quite simply, that in the effort to become accountable through limited but measurable goals for children that the schools may end up throwing out the baby with the bath water. H. Thomas James puts the matter succinctly:

> Determined to make the models work, we may restate the problem in simpler terms; instead of abandoning the model, we may abandon the problem. In some of our first efforts at accountability in schools, we seem to be doing the second of these: limiting our goals to the easily measurable and relatively inconsequential...If we teach the child to read and to count, the people will ask, as Plato did, why haven't we also taught him to be virtuous?[11]

It is not, of course, that the fundamental skills taught in schools are unimportant; they form the very basis for maintaining and extending the higher intellectual characteristics of Western Civilization. But they are not desired as ends in themselves, but as means to ends. Skillfulness, as such, is absolutely necessary, but absolutely insufficient for the perpetuation of civilization and for the creation of further civilization. Skills undirected, or as history has so often

seen, misdirected, can be deadly for mankind. Literacy, the chief of all school skills, has always been valued, not only for itself, but for its usefulness in turning the individual into the historic person, into the believing person, into the committed person. Whatever responses are made by schools to given societal contexts must recognize the danger of retrenchments in service which might be persuasive toward limiting their work to trivial goals. If we teach people to read, and they do not read, how shall society judge the schools?

It is not that these are somehow mutually exclusive goals. The potential dysfunction is simply that the self-preservation instinct which is so powerful in organizations holds the possibility that they will settle for whatever is immediately preserving. Katz and Kahn characterize the process as "information input, negative feedback, and the coding process."[12] The signals which come to an organization regarding its own performance are, by its need for self-preservation, interpreted and decoded according to that need. Other signals are tuned out. If schools settle for limited and measurable goals, this process will become so incorporated into the life of the organization that all else will be dismissed as irrelevant to its functioning.

FOOTNOTES
FOR
CHAPTER II

1. George Gallup, "The Third Annual Survey of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, 1971, "Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. LIII, No. 1, (Sept., 1971), pp. 26-38.

2. Survey respondents included parents of public school students, parents of parochial school students, adults not parents of students, and students in grades 11-12.

3. Kerr, Norman D. (pseudonym), "The School Board as an Agency of Legitimation," in Rosenthal, A., Governing Education, Anchor Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1969.

4. George Gallup, ibid.

5. Cunningham, Luvern L., "Our Accountability Problems," in Browder, L. H., Jr., (ed), Emerging Patterns of Administrative Accountability, McCutchan Publishing Corporation, Berkeley, Calif., 1971, pp. 47-61.

6. William G. Milliken, "Making the School System Accountable," Compact, (Oct., 1970), pp. 17-18.

7. Cohen, David K., "The Price of Community Control," in Browder, op. cit., pp. 106-126.

8. Gene V. Glass, "The Many Faces of 'Educational Accountability'," Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. LIII, No. 10, (June, 1972), pp. 636-639.

9. Cohen, ibid.

10. Blau, Peter M. and Scott, Richard W., Formal Organizations: A Comparative Study, Chandler Publishing Company, San Francisco, 1960.

11. H. Thomas James, "Some Thoughts on Accountability," The School Administrator, American Association of School Administrators, No. 8, (May, 1972), pp. 7-10.

12. Katz, Daniel, and Kahn, Robert L., The Social Psychology of Organizations, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1966.

CHAPTER III

THE CASE FOR BEING RESPONSIBLE

A. Accountability and Informed Decisionmaking

A basic difficulty which both haunts the school professional and irritates the outside observer has been pinpointed by Kenneth Boulding: it is that education is still a craft industry, with little change in production techniques over the centuries.[1] Boulding's explanation of this continuing condition rests in his assertion that we know very little of the actual workings of the human nervous system, a claim difficult to dispute. But it is also possible to believe that a great many changes can be made in the totality of the workings of schools as social systems-changes which rest on techniques and tools far advanced from the craft level of operation. Though this is not the place for a review of the potential of media, of new efforts at software programming, of computers, and other recent innovations in the actual teaching of children, one must recognize the very serious efforts being made to change the nature and quality of the interactions between teachers and children through imaginative uses of technology. What is of interest here is the recent development of ways of programming these interactions, of intellectual tools for studying the potential of interaction proposals and of evaluating those chosen for use. It is in these ways that the schools can become more responsive to the need for accountability.

It is at the decisionmaking level in the schools

that "craft-level" operations can no longer be supported. These in the past have been characterized by hierarchical decisionmaking on the allocation of inputs with relatively little, if any, attention paid to allocation-effect on process or output. New ways of going about this process are available; generally they are characterized as "systems" thinking. No matter the name or acronym given any of them, they share certain characteristics which must become standard to the schools if the schools are to improve their responsibility stance.

These decisionmaking techniques begin with an analysis of ongoing programs, or in the case of new proposals, an analysis of the various proposals being made. This in itself, the multiplicity of program analysis, is an important characteristic. Informed decisionmaking rests, not only on the worth of a given program or proposal in an absolute sense, but on its worth relative to other potential resource allocations.

Such analyses must encompass three aspects. The first two are cost and estimated output. That is, what does (or would) each of several given programs cost, and what values accrue to students from each? A third, and sometimes overlooked aspect, is, as Helmer points out, the degree to which each analyzed program is to be implemented, the points at which non-negligibility on the one hand and diminishing returns on the other are a result of the degree-of-implementation levels proposed.[2]

It is important at this point to note that these analyses gain in value to the extent that potential participants in the programs have had an opportunity to make clear their needs and expectations for current or proposed programs. The inadequacies of decisionmaking by authority figures only are so well recognized that Goldhammer sees the "Revolt Against Paternalism" as the most significant current in our society today.[3] We must move, he goes on to say, to organizational decisionmaking which "diffuses responsibility for decisionmaking among those individuals who are affected by the decisions."

Once a variety of proposals have been carefully studied for costs and values, and at various levels of implementation, the first decisionmaking process can be accomplished. It is important to note Swanson's warning: "Cost-effectiveness analysis cannot make decisions. It only makes available and arranges data in such a fashion as to sharpen the judgements of decisionmakers."[4]

It is also important to note that decisionmaking at this point is not the end of a "systems" process, but merely the end of the beginning. A continuing and highly important characteristic of the process is the monitoring and eventual evaluation of the programs agreed upon for implementation. It is enough to suppose that one has made a wise decision; <u>being responsible</u> clearly calls for an honest post-program evaluation of costs <u>and</u> values.

Several comments seem in order at this time relative

to the thesis being discussed. The first is that *being responsible to* is scarcely possible until systems behavior is well established. Not until cost-effectiveness analyses have become standard modes of decisionmaking can the public be given the sorts of information desired by those who call for accountability to the public.

It is also of importance to note that efforts at *being responsible to* must undergo the same careful analysis as should any other program of the schools. Using Helmer's discussion as a model,[5] if informing the public in an accountability sense is a measure "m", we must carefully study its costs and values at certain possible degrees of implementation "Q_1, Q_2,..." Moreover, we must study these costs and values of other measures for which the same resources might be allocated. We must, in effect, *be responsible* in our response to the rhetorical calls for *being responsible to* the public.

The beginning of *being responsible* rests at the decisionmaking level. Only when reasoned study of costs and values, of alternatives, and of results has begun can the inward focus thus suggested begin to make the necessary improvements in the life of the schools.

B. Accountability and the Organization

It is not only in the area of decisionmaking that updated information exists for organizational improvement. A good deal of theory relating to social systems has been developed, and empirical verification has begun to emerge.

These studies suggest that the use of systems behavior holds potential productivity values for schools.

The development of productivity among employees has long been thought to be associated with the generalized satisfaction of employees, or at least with the absence of any dissatisfactions. The stress has been on making people happy, on working conditions, salaries, fringe benefits, and whatever else might be deemed as positive and "rewarding" in nature. Recent research has done much to disabuse managers of this "contented cow" strategy.

Sergiovanni[6] undertook a study of the factors which teachers found to be dissatisfying and satisfying. He concluded that most "rewards" of schools were dissatisfiers, things which were positively dissatisfying in absentia, but seldom satisfying no matter to what degree they were present. These dissatisfiers were found in the conditions of work as contrasted to things arising from work itself. The latter, however, were found to be satisfiers, those elements in one's work which increased motivation toward the work itself. In a further delineation of his findings, he dichotomized these factors as "teacher centered" and "task oriented," finding that administrative behavior directed toward the former has little to do with actual work performance. "However," he continues, "when satisfaction is dependent upon performance in work, satisfaction and productivity are related." (underlining mine--JPM)

What are the factors, according to Sergiovanni, which

truly motivate productive satisfaction? They are those which arise from goal-oriented behavior, i.e., a sense of achievement, recognition, and responsibility. And it is precisely these which may be obtained with the use of systems thinking about organizational behaviors. Any of the systems models variously available, cost-effectiveness, PERT, PPBS, zero-base budgeting, management by objectives, and the like, all emphasize, indeed require, those elements which may lead to employee satisfactions and thence to productivity. These would include goal-setting through cost-and-value analyses of programs, and the careful study of the results obtained. Given the input of employees and the careful assignment of tasks, and followed by continuing re-allocation of resources as evaluation indicates, the potential for achieving among teachers feelings of achievement, recognition, and responsibility rises swiftly.

To the extent that a real accountability problem exists, then, the view taken here is that it relates to the productivity of the schools. To the extent that schools educate children they are thus faced with an internal problem, one that no amount of explaining to the public will mitigate. Schools must begin being responsible, and they must do so through the use of the updated information available regarding their own performance. Nor should it be forgotten that a genuine effort at goal-setting, at cost-and-value analysis, at evaluation and feedback, can lead to increasing improvement. "It was," concludes Sergiovanni,

"successful performance which accounted for the high attitudes expressed in achievement-centered stories...If performance is rewarded in terms of intrinsic personal success and extrinsic recognition for success, it will tend to be repeated."[7]

Hence the promise for real accountability inherent for schools in the careful study of their own business. Improved and shared decisionmaking leading to realistic and achievable goal-setting sets the stage for a cycle of improved productivity which is the end goal of accountability.

It is almost serendipitous to suggest that a current difficulty between the schools and their publics could be lessened in scope and degree through this process. This is the problem of "teacher militancy," of collective bargaining which has exacerbated both the fiscal and public relations problems of schools in recent times.

The phenomenon to be discussed here is made clear by Gouldner.[8] It is simply that the apparent issues in collective bargaining and the associated activities of worker organizations are often not the real issues. The frustrations arising from inadequate relationships with supervisory and managerial personnel, often not susceptible to actual negotiation, were the real problem; wages became their surrogate at the bargaining table. A one-time critic of the public schools, Mario Fantini, now confesses:

> At one time during the Sixties I considered myself a change agent. That is, I had a certain concept of reform--say like team teaching or educational technology, and I would go into a school system and try to manipulate the situation...Now I feel this

> is a wrong strategy to use. We must stop pushing people around even though it is done inadvertently, even though it is done in the name of reform. It never worked in the past, and I fear it will never work in the future...[9]

It is possible to believe that much of what is called "teacher militancy" today arises from the intense public pressures on teachers during the past twenty years, on teachers who were "pushed around" and never given substantive opportunities by their own administrators to use their talents in responsible, recognizable, and goal-oriented ways. An end to paternalism can be managed through inclusive systems practices which assist teachers toward productivity through goal-setting and goal achievement. And with the promise of improved achievement and responsibility and recognition can come a muting of the antagonistic positions of the public and its Board and administrator surrogates vis-a-vis the classroom teachers. The energies thus freed for everyone to set as a goal being responsible can do much to lead to public confidence.

FOOTNOTES
FOR
CHAPTER III

1. Boulding, Kenneth E., "Factors Affecting the Future Demand for Education," in Johns, et al, (eds) Economic Factors Affecting the Financing of Education, National Educational Finance Project, Gainesville, Fla., 1970, pp. 1-28.

2. Helmer, Olaf, "The Application of Cost-Effectiveness to Nonmilitary Government Problems," in Browder, L.H., Jr., (ed) Emerging Patterns of Administrative Accountability, McCutchan Publishing Corporation, Berkeley, Calif., 1971, pp. 275-286.

3. Goldhammer, Keith, et al, Issues and Problems in Contemporary Educational Administration, Univ. of Oregon Press, Eugene, Ore., 1967.

4. Swanson, Austin D., "Administrative Accountability Through Cost-Effectiveness Analysis: A Proposal," in Browder, op. cit., pp. 287-307.

5. Helmer, ibid.

6. Sergiovanni, Thomas J., "Factors Which Affect Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction of Teachers," in Carver, Fred D. and Sergiovanni, Thomas J., (eds), Organizations and Human Behavior: Focus on Schools, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1969.

7. Ibid.

8. Gouldner, Alvin W., Wildcat Strike, Harper Torchbooks, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1954.

9. Mario Fantini, as quoted in a "casual remarks" column, The School Administrator, American Association of School Administrators, No. 6 (March, 1972), p. 11.

CHAPTER IV

THE TOTALITY OF ACCOUNTABILLTY: A SUMMARY

How inclusive is accountability? Who shall be the participants in the response made by schools? The answer must lie in the nature of the schools in the American society. They are presumed to exist to serve all in a society of open classes where opportunity and mobility are precious goals. The schools are part and parcel of the government, of that basic instrumentality devised by man for the service of man. A genuine response to the call for improvement--to the call for accountability--must therefore be all-inclusive of patron and client, of teacher and administrator alike.

The schools are both cause and effect in a fluid society. They affect the shape of the society they serve, yet they are at a given moment simply mirrors of that society. One test for being "held to account," suggests Sir Geoffrey Vickers, is to determine the extent to which a given party has the power to allocate resources.[1] Society must be held to account as well as the schools when one considers the resources made available for the education of children.

But that is a political matter to be determined by the larger society, of which the school is but a part. The schools can affect that decision best by <u>being responsible</u> with the resources currently allocated. Nor should any school participant be spared this accountability. Briner argues that teachers are too little involved in management to be held accountable for the learning that occurs in their class

rooms.[2] But they do control much of what happens in those class rooms. They have substantive control of the interaction through which children are expected to learn. And with regard to the control of other resources, it is not sufficient to suggest that our view of who is to be held to account be controlled according to current practice. It is the practices which must be changed so that genuine accountability may be accomplished through shared decision-making.

As this must be done within schools, so must it be done outside them. Between the schools and the public reasoned involvements and responsible interactions must take place on the common ground of shared interest in the totality of education. A genuinely open system of communication and shared accountability must occur. Buchanan reminds us that there is:

> ...the choice-calculus of the individual citizen. His is the individual choice, and his preferences can be modified and manipulated only within relatively narrow limits. The politician who does not recognize this elementary fact will find his professional career foreshortened. And the advocate or the expert who fails the necessity of accommodating program proposals to the public's preferences is likely to become a frustrated and anguished man.[3]

Thus the need for schools, as with all government, to hear their public. As they eliminate paternalism within, so must they eliminate it from their public relationships.

But this can lead to creative and superior solutions to the problems that vex schools and public alike in the

education of the young. The public, as we have seen, takes seriously its share of blame, and it seeks help. Cohen scorns the "widespread belief that a little improvement in education will lead to the elimination of vast social and economic problems."[4] He goes on to remind us of how little difference schools actually make in the achievement of children as against what we might expect from their socio-economic status in life. The challenge to the schools in a genuine sense of being responsible to the public is to become but one, albeit a leading, agency for education in the community. Schools must in a creative interaction with the public assist that public in meeting its accountable responsibilities toward the education of children, both at the level of the home itself and the community at large. This will require a new sense of being responsible; it will enjoin upon both parties a new partnership in accountability. This will require openness, and honesty, and courage, as well as practiced expertise in what we already know can and should be done. Accountability can thus be transformed from what has been perceived as a limiting and scapegoat-seeking exercise to a new partnership among all school people and between school people and the American public.

FOOTNOTES
FOR
CHAPTER IV

1. Vickers, Sir Geoffrey, "Accountability," in Browder, L. H., Jr., (ed), Emerging Patterns of Administrative Accountability, McCutchan Publishing Corporation, Berkley, Calif., 1971, pp. 28-38.

2. Briner, Conrad, "Administrators and Accountability," in Browder, op. cit., pp. 74-80.

3. Buchanan, James M., "Taxpayer Constraints on Financing Education," in Johns, et al, (eds), Economic Factors Affecting the Financing of Education, National Educational Finance Project, Gainesville, Fla., 1970, pp. 265-290.

4. Cohen, David K., "The Price of Community Control," in Browder, op. cit., pp. 106-126.